

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (original): A radially self-expanding stent for implantation in a body passage comprises first and second sets of mutually counter-rotating metallic filaments which are braided together and define a tubular stent body having two ends which is mechanically biased towards a first radially expanded configuration in which it is unconstrained by externally applied forces and can be retained in a second radially compressed configuration, and in which some or all of the filament ends at the ends of the body are fixed together in pairs each consisting of counter-rotating filaments by placing the filaments over one another and placing them adjacent to and substantially parallel to one another and further comprising a join at each end fixing to retain the ends of the filaments in contact with one another.

Claim 2. (original): A stent according to claim 1, wherein the fixed ends are shaped or heat treated to urge the respective filaments to a position in which they are biased out of alignment with the adjacent filament to which they are connected and cross over one another.

Claim 3. (currently amended): A stent according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein ~~the~~ a welding softens the metal such that it forms a globule before resolidifying to form a bead.

Claim 4. (previously presented): A stent according to claim 1 or 2, wherein each filament end is welded to one of its next-but-one neighbours.

Claim 5. (previously presented): A stent according to claim 1 or 2, wherein some but not all of the filament ends are welded.

Claim 6. (original): A stent according to claim 5, wherein the join generally has a diameter of at least 1.2 times that of the diameter of the filament.

Claim 7. (currently amended): A stent according to claim 5, wherein the diameter of the join is no more than 3 times, ~~preferably less than 2.5~~, the diameter of the filament.

Claim 8. (previously presented): A stent according to any of claim 5, wherein at least some of the joins provide a shoulder in a rearward axial direction.

Claim 9. (previously presented): A stent according to claim 1 or 2, wherein, in its fully unloaded conformation the angle α between filaments is less than 90° .

Claim 10. (previously presented): A stent according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the angle at which the filaments are joined to one another is in the range 0° to 15° .

Claim 11. (previously presented): A stent according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the filaments bend outwardly towards the join, the angle at which they bend increasing as the filaments extend towards the join.

Claim 12. (new): A stent according to claim 5, wherein the diameter of the join is less than 2.5 times the diameter of the filament.